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that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church, we may be sure of this, that it does not mean that the church shall always have a visible head, whose religious teaching may be implicitly followed.

### THE WRITTEN WORD.

THERE is reason to believe that neither Protestants nor Roman Catholics are fully aware of the strong grounds that exist for considering the written Word of God to be the appointed depository of his revelation to man. It may, therefore, be profitable to both to set before them some of the many authorities in favour of an appeal to the written Word of God, and to nothing else, as containing all God's revealed Word, both as to faith and practice.

We shall begin by taking a view of the various ways in which God has revealed himself at different times.

It was to be expected that when God made man in his own image—made him a reasoning, intelligent, responsible being—he would not leave him without intimations of his will, but would reveal himself in such ways as should seem best to his infinite wisdom.

At first God spoke plainly, audibly, directly to his creatures. Thus he spoke to Adam in the garden, both before and after the fall. Thus he spoke to Cain, to Noah, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob. They were left in no doubt that God spoke to them, and that what they heard was the word of God.

Thus he spoke to Moses at the burning bush, in the land of Egypt. In all the revelations of his will, with regard to the deliverance of his people, he spoke to him face to face; so that Moses could say—"The Lord has appeared and spoken to me, and I speak in his name."

In the same way God spoke directly to both Moses and to the people in the wilderness. He, with his own voice, in the hearing of the people, spoke the Ten commandments at Mount Sinai.

The people, we read, were so overpowered by this terrible exhibition of God's glory that they prayed that he might not speak to them directly, but through his servant Moses (Ex. xx. 19)—"They said to Moses, Speak thou with us and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die."

The Lord then took Moses into the mount, and revealed to him the law and the statutes which he was to make known to the people. And at this time our God gave an intimation of the way in which, in future times, he proposed to make his creatures acquainted with his unchanging mind and will, and to have it ever preserved and kept before them. He bore his testimony to the use of having his will—what he decreed to his people—committed to writing, that it might be as permanently fixed and secured, for their instruction, as it was permanently fixed in his own mind. As Moses tells us (Deut. ix. 10)—"And the Lord delivered unto us two tables of stone, written with the finger of God, and on them was written according to all the word which the Lord spoke with you in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, in the day of assembly."

What a testimony is here had, from God himself, as to the value of having that committed to writing which it is his will, and for the good of man, to have preserved and kept in memory. If ever there were words likely to be remembered, and treasured up in men's minds, they were the Ten Commandments. The circumstances of their delivery, the solemn awfulness of the occasion, the Divine person who spoke them, their shortness, and yet their importance, all conspired to have permanently fixed them in the memory. Yet, the God who spoke them wrote them with his own finger on two tables of stone, and, in consequence, the Church has them, not as they might have been remembered, and handed down by tradition, but as our God delivered them.

After God, according to the desire of the people, had ceased to speak directly to them the other statutes and judgments, but had given them to Moses, who was to make them known to them, the Lord said unto Moses (Ex. xxxiv. 27)—"Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel."

Thus was written, by God's express direction, what is often referred to as the "Book of the Law of the Lord." And it is to be remarked, that now was the first case in which an opportunity was given for instruction by tradition—i.e., God speaking to one, and that person delivering what he had heard to another. If any one might have been depended upon for accurately remembering and faithfully delivering what had been said to him, it would have been Moses. But it was not God's intention to have his law to be transmitted by tradition from one person to another—from one generation to another. He had his law written for their learning, and for its safe and continued preservation as he had originally delivered it. And this book of the law was to be used as the storehouse and depository of God's revelation. So we read (Ex. xxiv. 3, &c.)—"Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments, &c.; and Moses wrote all the words of the Lord." And having offered sacrifice "he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people, and they said, All that the Lord hath said we will do, and be obedient."—Verse 7.

This reading of the written law was not to be done this once and no more. We read (in Deut. xxxi. 7, &c.)—"Moses called unto Joshua, and gave him a charge; and Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and that their children, which have not known anything, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as ye live in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it."

The history informs us that Joshua obeyed the directions given by Moses (Jos. viii. 30, &c.)—"Then Joshua built an altar unto the Lord God of Israel in Mount Ebal, as Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, &c. And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel. And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges stood on this side of the ark and on that side, &c. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them."

Hence it is abundantly evident that, at the setting up of the Jewish dispensation, the written Word was the depository of God's revelation. It, and it alone, contained all that the people were to believe and to do. It will be found that there is equally conclusive evidence that it continued to be so to the end of that dispensation. Moses, looking forward to the time when the people would desire to have a king set over them, gives this direction (Deut. xvii. 18)—"And it shall be, when he shall sit upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them," &c. We find King David thus charging his son Solomon (1 Kings ii. 3)—"Keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself."

Had the kings of Israel and Judah continued to be guided by what was written in the law of Moses, the state of the nation would have been very different from that which appears in their history; but the book of the law was not consulted—it was kept out of sight; at length it was lost, until, by God's help, it was found in the time of Josiah (2 Kings xxii. 11)—"And when Shaphan the scribe read it before the king, he rent his clothes, and said, Great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us." This book was acknowledged to be the rule by which they ought to have been guided.

Looking farther into their history, the captivity will be seen to have been brought as the judgment of God upon the people, for having transgressed the law which he gave them; and when, in his undeserved mercy, they were brought back to their land, they will be found acknowledging the written law to be the rule to which they should refer. We read (Neh. viii.)—"And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water-gate, and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel; and Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation, both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month; and he read therein before the street that was before the water-gate, from the morning until mid-day, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law; and Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; so they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the meaning." No one can read the history of the children of Israel and not see that, without doubt, under the Jewish dispensation, even though there was a hierarchy especially appointed of God, his written Word was still his ordained storehouse of truth, to be appealed to and received both by priests and people, and the appointed guide by adhering to which his people were to be kept in the right way, both of practice and faith. As the Apostle James said (Acts xv. 21)—"For Moses of

old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day."

The question, then, presents itself—Was a change introduced when our Lord brought in his gracious dispensation?

The first word we hear from the lips of our Lord, when entering on his ministry, was (Mat. iv. 4), "*It is written*," giving his sanction to the authority of the written Word. One of the first acts we hear recorded of him was to go into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and to stand up to read (Luke iv. 17)—"And there was delivered unto him the book of the Prophet Isaiah; and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,' &c.; and he began to say unto them, 'This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.'" Again (Luke x. 26)—"A certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?" Luke xvi. 29—"Abraham said unto him, They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them; and he said, Nay, Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent; and he said unto them, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." John v. 39, &c.—"We have our Lord saying to the unbelieving Jews, 'Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me; for had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me; but if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?' Mark vii. 5, &c.—"The Pharisees and Scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"—"making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered." Our Lord uniformly pointed out the error of those who thought to serve God according to the tradition or commandments of men, whilst he gave the whole sanction of his authority to God's Word preserved in writing, saying, "What is written?"

It may be well to notice one text, the only one that sounds as if by it our Lord gave his authority to another depository of truth besides the Scriptures (and which is often quoted for that purpose), when he condemned the man who should refuse to hear the Church—Mat. xviii. 17. If that text is examined it will appear that the matter to be referred to the Church was not a matter of God's revelation, either as to faith or practice, but a matter in dispute between man and man—"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them tell it to the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." The Church (whoever may be intended by that title) is to be the umpire to decide a matter in dispute between brethren. This is consistent with what St. Paul says (1 Cor. vi. 2)—"If the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" There is not a text that can be quoted in which our Lord sends the inquirer after God's revealed mind and will to any company of living men for information—in which he says to him who asks, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life? what shall I do to be saved?" "Hear the Church," but he has said, "Search the Scriptures"—"they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them."

Nor were things altered when the Lord had ascended into the heavens, having first desired his disciples to "go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things which he had commanded them, and promising to be with them always to the end of the world."

The Apostle John, at the end of his Gospel, says—"Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that believing ye might have life through his name." The Apostle Paul says that he was not taught by man, but by the Lord Jesus Christ. He, then, if any man might appeal solely to his own inspiration and expect everything he said to be received upon his authority, yet he is found always magnifying the Scriptures. When making his defence before Felix (Acts xxiv. 14) he says—"I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things that are written in the law and in the prophets." And before Festus and King Agrippa (Chap. xxvi. 22)—"I continue unto this day witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." In Rom. iv., when he would prove the doctrine of justification by faith, he says—"What saith the Scripture?" Rom. xv. 4—" whatsoever things were written

afortime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scripture, might have hope." &c., 2 Tim. iii. 14—"Continue in the things which thou has learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

We trust that the mass of Scriptural evidence to which we have above referred may lead our readers, whether Roman Catholics or Protestants, to the saving conviction, that the Holy Scriptures are intended, by that God under whose inspiration they were written, and by whose providence they have been preserved, to contain and to present to man that revelation of his will the knowledge of which must lead to their salvation and to his glory; and that it was intended that the instruction of his Church and people should be carried on through the means of the Bible; and we hope that some, at least, may be led by it to value "THE BOOK" more than they have ever done—to refer to it as conclusive authority on all points of religion—and, like the noble Bereans of old, "Search the Scriptures daily whether these things are so."

#### WHAT TRADITION TELLS US OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY—No. II.

JUSTIN MARTYR, TATIAN, ATHENAGORAS, THEOPHILUS, IRENEUS.

In our September number we laid before our readers all the passages we could find in the New Testament where the name of the Blessed Virgin is mentioned; and as none of our Roman Catholic correspondents have been able to point out that we have omitted any, we may take for granted that our list was complete. We found then that the whole number of those passages was very much less than we should have expected; that several of them are exactly such as the writers would have inserted, if it had been their express object to prevent future ages from carrying their veneration of the mother of our Lord to excess; and that nowhere in the New Testament does there occur an instance of the sacred writers either addressing prayers to the Blessed Virgin themselves, or of their exhorting their converts to implore her intercession. And we called your attention to the fact that her name is not once mentioned in any of the twenty-one apostolic epistles. We do not know in the least how this fact is to be accounted for, if we are to suppose that the sacred writers regarded the Blessed Virgin (as Romish authorities do now) as "their only confidence," "the entire ground of their hope." Certain it is that Roman Catholic bishops nowadays don't think it right to write long letters to their flocks without bringing in the Virgin's name. (Since our last remarks were published, for example, a pastoral was issued to the Roman Catholics of Dublin, half of which was taken up with her praises.) We gave insertion to a letter in which a correspondent furnished us with explanations, given by Roman Catholic divines, of the silence of the sacred writers concerning her; but we leave it to our readers to say whether there was one satisfactory explanation among the whole of them.

We went on then, in the October number, to examine what tradition tells of the Blessed Virgin. We went through all the genuine remains of what are called the Apostolic Fathers, and we found that the earliest uninspired Christian writers said just as little (or less) about her than the apostles and evangelists themselves. Her name is certainly not found incessantly on their lips.

We are now come to the middle of the second century—more than one hundred years after the death of our Lord. We pointed out to you, in our last article, that a tradition is but of little value if it cannot be traced nearer than a hundred years to the source whence it claims to be derived. For example, Dean Swift is not dead much more than a hundred years, and was one of the most popular men in Dublin in his day; and yet a very moderately-sized sheet of paper would contain all the traditions that could be collected in Dublin now about the dean; and if any one of these traditions were to ascribe to the dean opinions inconsistent with what we know of him through his published writings, no man of sense would attach the least credit to it.

However, though we acknowledge that the value of tradition becomes less and less the farther we go from the fountain head, we believe that it will be very useful to continue our examination of what the early Christians wrote concerning the Blessed Virgin; and, accordingly, we purpose to continue the subject in this and in some future articles: for we shall be enabled to judge, if the worship of the Blessed Virgin was not handed down by tradition, how it *did* take its origin; and we shall find reason to believe that Mr. Newman is quite right in maintaining that the Roman Catholic doctrine was not handed down, in its present form, by tradition, but that it was *developed*, in the course of time, by Christian writers. The hint dropped by one was taken up and expanded by another—what was in

one man's mouth a mere rhetorical flourish, became in another's a dry statement of facts—until, at last, doctrines assumed a form which would astonish no one more than some of the very writers whose sayings are cited in support of them.

We shall give our readers the means of judging whether this be not so with regard to the doctrine of the worship of the Virgin. And while we intend, in the course of these articles, to lay before our Roman Catholic readers all the passages from the Fathers which the most eminent divines of their church have ever urged in defence of this practice, it will be satisfactory to them to know, that if the result of the examination be to convince them that this practice cannot be traced to any apostolic tradition, still they will not have contradicted anything which their church has decided. The first work published by Mr. Newman, on joining the Roman Catholic communion, in effect, gives up tradition as a ground for Romish doctrine, and claims for the church the power of making discoveries in the Christian religion, and of *developing* doctrines which the Christians of the apostles' days knew nothing about. And since these views of Mr. Newman's have never been condemned by Roman Catholic authorities, but he is, on the contrary, in high favour with the dignitaries of his new church, our readers are safe in concluding that there will be nothing heretical in their believing that the worship of the Blessed Virgin was unknown to the apostles and their converts, however it may have been developed since, some way or other.

The first author whose writings we shall examine in this article is JUSTIN MARTYR. He was born in Palestine, of heathen parents—became well informed in the Grecian philosophy—was converted to Christianity when of mature age, and then wrote in its defence—was one of the most learned of the very early Christian writers, and eventually suffered martyrdom about the year, A.D., 165. The writings of Justin, which are still extant, are of considerable extent, and contain some important information as to the Church of his time. In particular, he gives some interesting details as to the public services of the Church, and as to the manner in which the sacraments of baptism and of the eucharist were then celebrated. But in no one of his works is there the slightest trace of prayers addressed either to the Blessed Virgin or to any other saint, whether for direct assistance or for intercession.

As it is part of our plan, however, to furnish you not only with all that can be urged from the Fathers in defence of prayers to the Blessed Virgin, but with any passages we can find where she is extolled, and her praises dwelt upon by the Fathers, we give the only passage of this nature we can find in Justin's writings, only remarking, that a Roman Catholic writer of the present day would scarcely have said so little in the course of 240 folio pages. Justin, then, in commenting on the fact that our Saviour was born of a virgin, was led to remark how fit it was that, as it was by means of a woman (namely, by Eve's eating the forbidden fruit) that sin entered into the world, so likewise the instrumentality of a woman should be employed in the plan for our redemption, that so disobedience might be destroyed in the same manner in which it was introduced into the world—

"For Eve being a virgin, and incorrupt, having received the word from the serpent, brought forth transgression and death: but Mary the Virgin, having received faith and joy (on the angel Gabriel announcing to her the glad tidings, that the Spirit of the Lord should come upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadow her), answered, Be it unto me according to thy word. And of her was born he of whom we have shown that so many Scriptures have spoken: he by whom God destroys the serpent, and angels and men resembling (the serpent), but works a rescue from death for such as repent of evil and believe on him."

This is the strongest passage in all Justin in praise of the Blessed Virgin; and you will observe, that the notion of offering prayers to her is not once suggested by it, and that nothing is said of her except what Protestants are ready to admit. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that in this parallel between Eve and the Virgin Mary, Justin merely institutes a comparison suggested by his own ingenuity, and that he does not pretend to be communicating any doctrine not contained in Scripture, handed down to him by his predecessors. Justin merely makes the remarks which his own reason suggested on the facts contained in Scripture; but he does not pretend to be adding any facts of his own to those already recorded in the Bible. This passage from Justin, although it has no doctrinal importance, is interesting in an historical point of view, because this comparison which Justin suggested, between Eve and the Virgin Mary, was one which greatly pleased some of the succeeding Fathers; and we shall see how some of them improved on it.

The folio volume in which the Benedictine editors published the works of Justin Martyr contains besides writings in defence of Christianity, composed by TATIAN, by ATHENAGORAS, and by THEOPHILUS, who all likewise lived in the second century. We shall not weary you by going separately through each of them; but will cut the matter short by telling you at once, of all three,

that there is not a word of the Blessed Virgin in any one of them. Not but that there were opportunities, when any one whose mind had been in the habit of dwelling on the thoughts of the Virgin would not have been silent about her. For instance, Tatian compares the habits of the females celebrated by the Grecian poets with those of the Christian virgins. But these ancient Christian writers not only do not (as Romanists do now) make out opportunities of speaking of the Virgin, whatever be the subject in hand, but they are silent about her, even when a natural opportunity for speaking about her presents itself.

We shall conclude this article with an examination of those parts of the writings of IRENEUS which bear on our subject. This eminent Christian writer was born in Asia Minor, and was one of the most eminent bishops of Gaul at the latter part of the second century. Much of his writings has been lost; and his principal work (against heresies) has only come down to us in a Latin translation, merely fragments of the original Greek having been preserved. There has been enough left, however, to enable us to pronounce with sufficient certainty on the doctrines taught by Irenæus, and to gather this, at least, from his total silence on the subject, that no prayers were in his time offered by orthodox Christians to the Blessed Virgin or to any other of the saints; for nothing of the kind is to be found in any of his writings which have reached us. Of passages in his works where the Virgin's name occurs, there are only two or three remarkable enough to be worth quoting—

"When Mary was hastening to the admirable miracle of the wine, and wishing, before the time, to participate in the compendious draught, the Lord, repelling her unseasonable haste, said—Woman, what have I to do with thee?"—*Adversus Hæreses* iii. 18.

It is plain that, in this passage, Irenæus speaks of the haste with which our Lord's mother urged him to the performance of the miracle of the change of water into wine as something censurable, and that he did not conceive it necessary to maintain that she was free from all tincture of sin or error.

In the other two passages to which we allude, Irenæus takes up the comparison which Justin had instituted, between the Virgin Mary and Eve, only adding of his own some further speculation as to the happy meeting of the two in Paradise. The following are the passages. To avoid all cavil we adopt the translation of Messrs. Berington and Kirk, whose work is the storehouse from which modern Romish controversialists draw their citations from the Fathers—

"As Eve having Adam for a husband, but being still a virgin, becoming disobedient, became the cause of death both to herself and to the whole human race; so also Mary, having her predestined husband, but being nevertheless a virgin, being obedient, became the cause of salvation both to herself and to the whole human race. And thus the knot of Eve's disobedience was untied through Mary's obedience: for what the virgin Eve tied through unbelief, the Virgin Mary unloosed through faith."—*Adv. Hæreses* iii. 33.

"As she (Eve), through the discourse of a (fallen) angel, was seduced, so as to flee from God, having transgressed his word: so Mary, through the discourse of a (good) angel, was evangelized, so as to bear God, being obedient to his word. And if Eve disobeyed God, yet Mary was persuaded to obey God, that the Virgin Mary might become the advocate of the virgin Eve. And as the human race was bound to death through a virgin, it is saved through a virgin, the scales being equally balanced—virginal disobedience by virginal obedience."—*Adv. Hæreses* v. 19.

The only correction we have to make in the preceding translation is in the word translated advocate, which, there is every reason to believe, should rather be translated consoler or comforter. The original Greek is lost, as mentioned above; but there is little reason to doubt that the word employed must have been a derivative of *παράκλησις*, that being the word for which the Latin "advocate" is a constant equivalent. For example, Tertullian (*Cont. Marcion* iv. 14) translates the words "to comfort those that mourn" (*Isaiah* lxi. 3)—"advocare lugentes." And, if this be so, the passage would simply refer to the consolation which Eve would find in seeing the damage repaired which had been caused by her sin, and in meeting with her whose seed had bruised the serpent's head.

But let us waive this point; let us suppose that "advocate" is the exact translation of the word; and let us grant, moreover, that Irenæus was in possession of authentic information that the Virgin in heaven pleads for Eve, does it follow that she can hear our prayers, addressed to her while we are on earth? If we had a brother in a distant country, and even if we believed that he was likely to pray for us, we should have no right to pray to him to offer up his supplication on our behalf: and we find, in point of fact, that whatever be the sense of this rhetorical passage, and whether or not

\* In this obscure expression Irenæus alludes to a former remark of his, that the ordinary operations of nature, whereby the water which falls from heaven is transmuted by successive changes, first, to the sap of the vine, then to the juice of the grape, and so to wine, were, in the miracle of the change of water into wine, compressed into a compendious form: the same thing being done in a few minutes which, in the ordinary course of nature, requires a whole year.